

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS23933

This FY 2015 supplemental appropriation to the Department of Fish and Game provides for two unanticipated one-time projects including \$1.5 million to spend moneys from the Bonneville Power Administration for erosion control actions in the Clark Fork Delta in Bonner County, and \$100,000 to spend moneys from the Office of Species Conservation for stream habitat restoration on tributaries of the Palouse River.

Albeni Falls Dam was built in the 1950s and controls the level of Lake Pend Oreille, which rises and falls about 11 feet each year. BPA sells the electricity generated from the dam. Control of the lake level benefits flood control, power production, and recreation. However, when the lake is drawn down, the shorelines collapse and slough off. Furthermore, two of Avista's dams on the Clark Fork River impact the delta by trapping sediment, branches, and detritus that would have flowed into the delta. The intent is to preserve what remains of the delta and start to recover some ground. Deltas are intensely productive zones for wildlife. It serves as a mixing zone for the lake and river, and a corridor linking the Bitterroot and Cabinet ranges. The plan calls for a new channel to improve fish habitat, building rock walls and weirs to redirect the water's current, planting willows and shrubs among the rocks, eradicating canary grass, and using nature for most of the revegetation. The department anticipates the current work will be the first of several projects. Over \$12 million of restoration work has been identified.

Furthermore, IDFG is acquiring detailed terrain data using airborne Light Detection And Ranging technology, and digital ortho-imagery for selected tributaries and reaches of the Potlatch River which is a tributary to the Clearwater River. These data will support collaborative Tributary and Reach Assessments which will be used to help identify, prioritize, and implement sustainable fish habitat improvement projects and to help focus those projects in addressing key limiting factors to protect and improve survival of salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act. One near-term project these data will help inform is on the ground habitat work to provide fish passage at Big Bear Falls on Big Bear Creek, a tributary of the Potlatch River. This bill includes \$100,000 in dedicated appropriation to expend moneys passed through the Office of Species Conservation for habitat improvement.

FISCAL NOTE

The additional FY 2015 one-time appropriation is \$1,600,000 of which \$100,000 is from the Department of Fish and Game Other Fund, and \$1,500,000 is from the Fish and Game Federal Fund.

Contact:

Ray Houston
Budget and Policy Analysis
(208) 334-4741